

# Annual Report

2018-2019



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## About NCOSS

The NSW Council of Social Service (NCOSS) works with and for people experiencing poverty and disadvantage in NSW to make positive change in our communities. When rates of poverty and inequality are low, everyone in NSW benefits.

With 80 years of knowledge and experience informing our vision, NCOSS is uniquely placed to bring together civil society to work with government and business to ensure communities in NSW are strong for everyone.

As the peak body for the community sector in NSW we support the sector to deliver innovative services that grow and evolve as needs and circumstances change.

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*We acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the country on which we work.  
We pay respects to Elders past, present and emerging*

## President's Message

Welcome to our 2018-19 Annual Report. Over the last financial year our members, stakeholders, communities and staff have worked toward the goal of a NSW free from poverty and disadvantage and a sector that continues to thrive.

This year, much of our work has been in giving people and communities a platform to have their stories heard and experiences articulated.

From conferences held all over the state, to influencing the public debate during the state election campaign and to grilling Ministers about the Budget over breakfast, we have had a solid year. NCOSS works to amplify the voices of people in our communities who are vulnerable and disadvantaged, and assist communities to build the services and supports that they need. Our sector is in a state of change with major reforms affecting communities and services across NSW. This year we finalised a new strategic plan to help guide and focus our work during a time of change.

I would like to acknowledge and thank our CEO, Joanna Quilty and her dedicated team for their hard work and many achievements over the year. To all of our Members, thank you for your support and commitment, your involvement and enthusiasm has been truly appreciated.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jim'.

## CEO's Message

NSW is a prosperous state. We have a strong economy, jobs growth, record infrastructure spend and a budget in surplus. However there are too many people that are not reaping the benefits of our prosperity and who experience unacceptable levels of disadvantage. In some communities more than 1 in 4 people live in poverty. Poverty strikes even in our most affluent communities where 1 in 25 people are affected.

As the peak body for the community sector in NSW, we've been working hard to shape positive change in our sector and beyond. It has been a challenging time – community organisations are facing increased demand alongside dwindling resources. At the same time, the sector is undergoing significant change, including increased competition, investment and commissioning approaches and the personalisation of care and support.

In the face of these challenges, the NSW community services sector remains committed, diverse and adaptable. Our members have provided invaluable feedback and advice that has allowed NCOSS to be a strong voice advocating for a NSW where no one is left behind and those who are struggling get the support they need.

We look forward to continuing to work in partnership with the sector and with government.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Joanna Quilty'.



2018-2019

# Highlights

## Advocacy

We advocated on a range of issues impacting NSW communities and our members:

- Social and affordable housing
- Energy hardship policies
- Raising the rate of Newstart
- Access to mental health and drug use support services
- Ensuring a sustainable community services sector
- The regulation of lobbying, access and influence in NSW
- Public transport and community transport
- Their Futures Matter reform
- Implementation of the NDIS in NSW
- No-grounds evictions in NSW tenancy legislation

### We did this through:

- Attending 23 meetings with members of Parliament and their staff
- Making 18 submissions to inquiries and reviews
- Providing advice to diverse bodies including the NSW Productivity Commission, Infrastructure NSW, Service NSW, Mental Health Commission of NSW, ICAC, the Australian Energy Regulator and our funding bodies (Family and Community Services and the Department of Health)



## Key analysis, policy and research

Cost of Living 2018: Access to healthy food

2019 NSW Election Platform: No child in poverty

Insights on Priorities: The perceptions of NSW residents on inequality and priorities for change

NSW 2019-20 Budget analysis



## NCOSS media presence

We contributed to public debate on key issues facing NSW communities such as housing, cost of living, mental health and transport:

**145**  
media appearances  
or mentions

**22**  
radio interviews

**9**  
print articles

**10**  
television interviews  
across 7 News,  
9 News, ABC and NBN

**23**  
online articles across  
SMH, ABC, Yahoo  
Finance, Probono,  
9 News, 10Now



## Supporting our members and the sector

Throughout the year, we engaged with and supported our 486 members and others in the sector.

- Consulting on our 2019 election platform, endorsed by 73 organisations including industry and peak bodies, service providers, and corporate partners
- Investing in Regional Communities conferences in 5 locations with 298 participants coming together to learn, engage and connect
- 28 face-to-face training sessions in 6 NSW regions covering parliamentary inquiries, law for not-for-profits, outcomes measurement and evidence-informed practice
- Our post budget breakfast at Parliament House attended by 200 participants to hear from our political and community leaders
- Fortnightly editions of NCOSS Big Picture eNews distributed to 3,947 subscribers
- Representing the views of our members on contracting, commissioning, indexation and other sector issues

## Partnerships

NCOSS brought together the Building Great Communities Coalition of 17 NSW peak organisations to prioritise actions and call for a fairer, more inclusive NSW.

Together with the NSW Office of Social Impact Investing NCOSS hosted the 2019 Investing for Good Conference. Over 200 participants from the community, government and corporate sectors attended and shared their experience and expertise to further develop the growing impact investing ecosystem.

## NCOSS Jobs Board

Advertised to 2832 subscribers searching for social policy and community sector employment opportunities, helping community organisations connect with those looking for work in the sector. The Jobs Board mailing list has increased by 583 subscribers from last financial year.



## NCOSS digital footprint

**10 per cent increase** in eNews subscribers over the last financial year

Social media total reach of **7,300 accounts** across platforms

The NCOSS facebook page has **2300 likes**, nearly a 10 per cent increase from last financial year

**70,554 unique users** have accessed the NCOSS website and its resources

There were **3,300 views** of Chloe Steel's short film about youth mental health services for the NCOSS NSW Election Platform

# An Influential Voice

**Goal: NCOSS is an influential voice with and for people experiencing poverty and inequality in NSW, and the community organisations that work with them.**

## **The 2019 NCOSS Election Platform: No Child in Poverty**

was shaped by the key issues, challenges, stories and solutions discussed at 18 consultations across NSW. Members, sector representatives and community leaders identified affordable and secure housing, lifelong learning, access to justice, mental health, family and connectedness, and access to community as key to breaking the cycle of poverty and disadvantage for children and young people in NSW.

The NCOSS Election Platform reflected these priorities and was launched at the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence in October, 2018. Attendees, including Members of Parliament, heard from Keenan Mundine and Simon Byrne on their lived experiences of trauma and disadvantage, and the support that makes a difference. **A short film commissioned by NCOSS** for the election platform featured youth mental health advocate Chloe Steel describing the challenges of accessing suitable care and support in regional NSW.

In the lead up to the NSW Election, **NCOSS supported community sector organisations to run their own campaigns** by providing advocacy kits, media resources and support.

Prior to the election, NCOSS commissioned a poll through Essential Media to gauge perceptions of inequality in NSW. The resulting publication **'Insights on Priorities'** used the survey's findings to communicate that people feel inequality is growing and that more action is required from the NSW Government on a range of essential services. 'Insights on Priorities' was sent to all new Members of Parliament following the election.



## **Policy Win:**

\$88 million to enhance availability of student support officers and access to dedicated mental health professionals for high school students to improve mental health and well-being – a priority mental health ask in the NCOSS election platform.

## **Impact:**

Seeing the short film featuring Chloe's experience with mental health supports prompted Ms Jenny Aitchison MP, Member for Maitland, to seek a meeting with her. Chloe had the opportunity to inform her local representative about her experiences, and advocate for more services for young people across NSW.

## **Awareness:**

NCOSS campaigned to raise the profile of the challenges faced by community transport providers in NSW. We talked about the issues on ABC Riverina and ABC South East NSW radio in February 2019. NCOSS continues to advocate for improved conditions for this important service.





**The 2018 Cost of Living Report**, launched in September 2018 at NSW Parliament, focused on access to healthy food based on a survey of 402 people on low incomes. The report included information on their experiences of food insecurity. NCOSS provided evidence at the public hearing of the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into Fresh Food Pricing. The Inquiry's final report called on the NSW Government to improve access to fresh food in disadvantaged communities.

**The NCOSS 2019-20 Budget Analysis** highlighted positive measures in the state budget for those doing it tough such as free mobile dental clinics and breakfasts for children in targeted locations. However it also indicated that clear commitments on social and affordable housing, community transport, early intervention and initiatives to reduce over-representation of Aboriginal people in the criminal justice system were missing.

**The Post-Budget Breakfast** held at NSW Parliament House in June brought together 200 community leaders, sector representatives and decision makers to consider the impacts of the 2019-20 budget on those experiencing poverty and disadvantage and the sector that supports them. A panel discussion, moderated by journalist and columnist Jacqueline Maley, was an opportunity to hear from experienced voices in the sector. Minister for Finance the Hon. Damien Tudehope MP, Minister for Families, Communities and Disability Services the Hon. Gareth Ward MP, and Shadow Treasurer the Hon. Ryan Park MP took questions from attendees. The Post-Budget Breakfast provided a united and powerful platform for the sector to advocate on key issues, including the Budget's inadequate indexation of 1.75 per cent for community services.

### Policy win:

\$8 million over 4 years for Foodbank NSW/ACT to expand the School Breakfast 4 Health program to a further 500 schools, with those in lower socioeconomic areas prioritised.

### Impact:

**"The Post-Budget Breakfast was a great event and very engaging... covered both sides of politics and engaged the sector and corporate."**  
NCOSS member, Sydney

### Advocacy effort:

NCOSS worked with the sector following the NSW 2019-20 Budget to highlight to Members of Parliament the need for community services' indexation to be increased to 3 per cent. This reflects the rising cost of service provision, including wage increases mandated by the Fair Work Commission.





The fortnightly **NCOSS Big Picture eNews** publication has approximately 4,000 subscribers ranging from individuals to organisations to key government and policy decision makers. NCOSS Big Picture has continued to inform the health and community sectors across NSW on news, events and professional development opportunities.

NCOSS expanded its **social media** engagement through Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. We engaged online with organisations, individuals, members and non-members to increase awareness and active participation in NCOSS advocacy, campaigns and events.



### Awareness:

NCOSS features in ABC's pre-election 'Cost of Living' print, TV and podcast series.

We highlighted that vulnerable households do not benefit from measures targeting middle income families. The related on-line story had over 340,000 viewings.

**"I think there is a focus on middle-income families and that is fair enough, but it's those who are in low-income households who are really struggling, who aren't as vocal, who are really being overlooked"**

NCOSS CEO Joanna Quilty,  
ABC News online,  
18 February 2019.

## Research undertaken:

The 2019 Cost of Living survey data was collected and analysed by our research partners, the Institute for Public Policy and Governance, UTS.

We conducted a series of interviews with disability advocacy and information organisations about their experiences of sector reform under the NDIS, their plans for the future and impacts for the people they support.

NCOSS commenced work with the National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling on the development of an online mapping tool and report exploring rates of economic disadvantage, along with geographic and demographic features across NSW.



# Strong and Connected

**Goal: NCOSS has a talented and cohesive team that is resourced to do its work. We are connected and responsive to both our members and people experiencing poverty and inequality in NSW.**

Throughout the year NCOSS:

- Convened six bi-monthly **Forum of Non Government Agencies (FONGA)** meetings. FONGA brings together leaders of the community sector to provide a collective voice to government and other key stakeholders toward improving outcomes for disadvantaged people and communities and the sector.
- Convened four **Regional Forum** meetings to seek regional perspectives and contributions for the NSW election campaign, submissions for Their Futures Matter reform, the Productivity Commission Mental Health Inquiry and input to the new NCOSS Strategic Plan.

The **Investing in Communities Regional Conference** series was held in five locations across the state in August and September 2018. The conferences brought together representatives and leaders from regional community services. Participants connected on key issues, engaged with capacity building opportunities and learned about the latest government initiatives. Our program of workshops focused on:

- Connecting local and state organisations
- Local success stories
- Providing effective, informative and interactive opportunities to learn.

## **NCOSS partners with the community sector and across corporate and government agencies.**

Through our partnerships and collaborations we have developed relationships that build impact and create opportunities.

In consultation with 26 community sector peak bodies, NCOSS led negotiations with the NSW Department of Families and Community Services (FACS) to establish the **Commissioning Co-governance Group (CCG)**. The CCG is intended to ensure a partnership approach with government in transitioning to a commissioning framework and through which the sector's needs and issues can be appropriately represented.

## **Outcomes:**

Of 298 regional conference attendees across 5 locations:

- 88% reported that their expectations of the event were met or exceeded.
- 80% reported that they felt better equipped to effectively respond to issues arising in their communities.
- 75% reported they felt better networked within their community following the conference.

## **Impact:**

**“Enjoyed the conference, valued the opportunity to network and the range of workshops”**

**NCOSS Member and Regional Conference participant, Ballina**

## **Partnership impact:**

“A very good partnership – giving us the opportunity to have regional reach that we hadn't anticipated or even considered how we would otherwise achieve” – major event partner Return and Earn, the Environmental Protection Authority NSW

NCOSS participated in the ongoing **review of the Sector Development Program**. The review aims to establish a clear program and outcomes framework and collaborative approach to sector development for and by the 14 peak organisations funded by FACS.

NCOSS coordinated the sector's input into the review of the **Human Services Agreement (HSA)**, which provides a consistent set of standard terms and conditions for non-government organisations (NGOs) contracted by government. Our ongoing advocacy on the HSA aims to ensure that NGOs transition onto an agreement that is workable and fit-for-purpose.

We developed the **NCOSS 2019-22 Strategic Plan** through comprehensive consultation including workshops and online engagement with members, partners and other key stakeholders. The new strategic plan centres on the goals of:

- Working to amplify the voices of people affected by poverty and disadvantage
- Supporting a diverse, collaborative and innovative community sector
- Forming constructive partnerships to deliver outcomes
- Building a strong, effective and sustainable NCOSS

## Vision

### A NSW free from poverty and disadvantage

#### Purpose

We advocate, collaborate and connect, as an independent public voice, to build inclusive communities where everyone can thrive, supported by a strong, diverse and effective community sector.

## Our Values

Courage

Integrity

Fairness

Inclusion

NCOSS works to **strengthen the skills of the NSW community sector** in the midst of significant program reforms and ever-changing environments.

Over 2018-19, the **NCOSS sector development team delivered** 13 face-to-face capacity-building and training sessions on law for not-for-profits, governance, volunteer management, parliamentary inquiries, outcomes measurement and evidence-informed practice. We worked in partnership with Justice Connect, the NSW Legislative Council, Fams and the National Workforce for Child Mental Health.

## Training impact:

Post-training surveys showed that across all sessions:

- 92% of respondents said their level of knowledge increased.
- 89% of respondents reported an increase in their level of confidence.
- 85% of respondents indicated plans to implement a new practice as a result of the session.

## Outcome:

Parliamentary Inquiry training, co-hosted by NCOSS and the NSW Legislative Council, provides participants with skills in making submissions to and appearing before parliamentary inquiries. Over the 2018-19 year, the majority of participants found the training to be useful or very useful for learning about parliamentary committees and maximising the impact of submissions.

**"Thank you, brilliant facilitators, wealth of knowledge, learned a lot!"**

Participant,  
Sydney 14 November 2018



NCOSS was engaged by FACS to support relevant organisations to transition their services to the new Targeted Earlier Intervention (TEI) Outcomes Framework. The **TEI Sector Assistance Strategy Project** provided 15 practice workshops, coordinated individualised support for 38 organisations and created resources for sector development support across NSW.

Planning and work commenced to support the **NSW Homelessness Strategy 2018-23**. NCOSS received funding from FACS to improve access to appropriate support for people at risk of homelessness and struggling to pay their bills. We co-planned a Ministerial Forum hosted by FACS to support the private sector to build on existing financial hardship provisions and programs. We will continue to work with financial institutions, including telecommunications and energy companies, to improve supports for customers experiencing financial difficulties. So far:

- We are working with Service NSW on ways to further promote Cost of Living products
- We have undertaken data collection on telecommunications bill stress and barriers to using Service NSW Cost of Living products.



Through the **Targeted Earlier Intervention Sector Assistance Strategy** project NCOSS partnered with Fams to hold workshops in Dubbo, Bathurst, Griffith, Gosford, Newcastle, Port Macquarie, Coffs Harbour, Tweed Heads, Inverell, Hornsby, Sydney, Campbelltown and Western Sydney.

**263**  
individuals attended,  
representing  
**241**  
TEI-funded organisations

**Impact:**

**“The training was so much more informative than anything I had been to before, and felt more like the reform is working with us as an organisation rather than us having to change and fit in or have to opt out. Thank you for dispelling the myths... Looking forward to the future!”**

TEI Workshop Participant,  
June 2019



# A Platform for Possibility

**Goal: NCOSS is a place where people and organisations come together to create change, opportunity and knowledge with and for people experiencing poverty and inequality.**

Led by NCOSS, the **Building Great Communities** coalition was established in early 2019. 17 NSW peak social sector organisations came together to advocate for a fairer, more inclusive NSW.

In the lead-up to the state election, participating peak bodies organised events across NSW to highlight issues affecting communities, including in the Northern Rivers, Central Coast and Penrith.

The Building Great Communities website included a comprehensive 'policy tracker' which presented reliable and up-to-date information on the major parties' positions on issues relevant to the community sector and people experiencing poverty and disadvantage.

Following the election, the Building Great Communities coalition has continued to work together, collaborating on issues of mutual concern.

The third **Investing for Good Conference** (I4G) was held in May 2019. I4G aimed to enhance the capacity of the sector to engage in social impact investment opportunities. A wide range of partners is essential to nurture this growing ecosystem and this year saw us collaborate with more than ever before including: the private sector, impact investment firms, business chambers, insurance organisations, the NSW Office of Social Impact Investment and the Commonwealth Department of Social Services. The I4G conference was an opportunity to reflect on progress so far by showcasing organisations successfully engaged with social impact.

## Key statistics:

The **Building Great Communities** website had 1168 individual users, with a total of 4327 page views.

## Media coverage:

5 radio stations; 2SM, 2GB, ABC Riverina and ABC South East NSW, and ABC TV covered the Building Great Communities policy platform during the state election campaign.

## Key statistics:

### Investing for Good

- A sold out event
- Over 200 organisations, government representatives and investors attended
- A total of 19,400 views on the I4G website between January and May
- The I4G twitter marketing strategy led to a total of 30,500 user impressions in the month leading up to the event
- NCOSS live tweeted the I4G conference day, leading to 10,000 organic appearances across twitter feeds.

## Impact:

**"I was unexpectedly surprised at just how much I got out of the discussions. It went well beyond impact investing and touched on the elements of a changing funding environment. Great work!"**

Investing for Good attendee



In partnership with FACS and the Australian Services Union (ASU), NCOSS established the specialised **Intensive Therapeutic Care (ITC) Jobs Board** launched in May 2019. The ITC Jobs Board allows FACS-funded providers to advertise ITC jobs across NSW for free. This collaborative effort responds to the key workforce challenge of retaining staff in the sector and supporting staff to access new opportunities. In its first month of operation, the site had over 600 unique views.

This year the **Social Innovation Council** continued to provide the opportunity for government and the sector to come together and consider innovation in human services. In 2018/2019 the Council, together with the social services sector, facilitated the development and promotion of the NGO Capability Building Tool. The NGO Capability Building Tool is a free online resource that allows organisations delivering human services to self-assess their customer centered service delivery. Organisations that complete the tool receive a score card and access to free online resources and training for self-directed learning and continuous improvement.

### Beyond sector partnerships throughout 2018-2019:

NCOSS together with Aon Insurance, continued to provide the community sector with information to assist not-for-profits to identify their insurance needs and keep up to date with new and relevant products.

NCOSS joined the NSW Business Chamber and Western Sydney Business Connection. NCOSS staff attended networking events to inform the business community of NCOSS work along with opportunities for investment in and partnering with the not-for-profit sector.

NCOSS worked with non-traditional partners to host sector events, including KPMG for the Post-Budget Breakfast, and iCare insurance and HESTA for the Investing for Good and regional conferences. These partnerships brought varied interests together to share knowledge and create opportunities.



## Financial Report

## Statement of Comprehensive Income

For the Year Ended 30 June 2019

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
<b>Income</b>			
Revenue	2	2,566,976	3,456,946
Other income	2	120,922	93,890
Interest revenue		29,445	32,310
Net realised/unrealised (losses)/gains		(11,529)	13,599
<b>Expenses</b>			
Administration		(120,476)	(131,497)
Brokerage and sponsorships		(36,518)	(355,891)
Conferences		(183,793)	(203,866)
Consultants and contractors		(252,151)	(307,004)
Depreciation and amortisation		(160,366)	(177,316)
Employee benefits		(1,492,564)	(1,820,395)
Insurance		(21,830)	(18,241)
Office overheads		(15,405)	(20,271)
Premises		(65,810)	(46,553)
Rent	3	(179,840)	(169,822)
Travel		(47,705)	(144,192)
Other		(124,694)	(182,903)
<b>Surplus for the year</b>		<b>4,662</b>	<b>18,794</b>
Other comprehensive income for the year		-	-
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>		<b>4,662</b>	<b>18,794</b>



## Financial Report

## Statement of Financial Position

For the Year Ended 30 June 2019

	Note	2019 \$	2018 \$
<b>Assets</b>			
<b>Current assets</b>			
Cash and cash equivalents	4	742,473	1,488,427
Trade and other receivables	5	95,349	271,786
Financial assets	7	1,538,316	1,364,650
Other current assets	6	50,640	26,981
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>2,426,778</b>	<b>3,151,844</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>			
Financial assets	7	20,000	20,000
Plant and equipment	8	67,193	224,290
Other assets	6	51,270	49,133
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<b>138,463</b>	<b>293,423</b>
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>2,565,241</b>	<b>3,445,267</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
<b>Current liabilities</b>			
Trade and other payables	9	622,769	1,501,238
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<b>622,769</b>	<b>1,501,238</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>			
Provisions	10	107,443	113,662
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>		<b>107,443</b>	<b>113,662</b>
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>730,212</b>	<b>1,614,900</b>
<b>Net assets</b>		<b>1,835,029</b>	<b>1,830,367</b>
<b>Equity</b>			
Accumulated surplus		1,835,029	1,830,367
<b>Total equity</b>		<b>1,835,029</b>	<b>1,830,367</b>

# A NSW free from poverty and inequality

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